

Holy Cross Ranger District
24747 US Hwy 24
P.O. Box 190
Minturn, CO 81645
(970) 827- 5715
www.fs.usda.gov/whiteriver



United States Department of Agriculture



HIKING

BIGHORN CREEK TRAIL #2013

Length: 3.25 miles (one way)

Difficulty: More Difficult

Beginning Elevation: 8,608 ft.

Elevation Gain: +2,180 ft.-0 ft. = +2,180 ft.

Trail Use: High

Open To: Hiking

Ending Elevation: 10,788 ft.

USGS Map(s): Vail East

Access from Vail: Travel east on I-70 to exit 180, exit here and turn right onto Bighorn Road. Proceed 0.7 mile to Columbine Drive, turn left. Continue 0.2 mile as the road passes under the interstate through a narrow passage. There is limited parking on the left side of the road. Additional parking is available just before you cross under the interstate.

Trail Highlights: The first 1/2 mile of the trail climbs steeply out of the Vail Valley, then more gradually climbs up through stands of aspen and pine. The trail passes beaver ponds and the remains of old mining camps as well as Bighorn Falls. Near mile 2, the views of Vail and Bighorn drainage are exceptional. Around mile 3, the trail passes through open meadows and stands of subalpine fir and Englemann spruce, offering a chance to see the Grand Traverse, a continuous 13,000 foot ridge connecting several peaks and high drainages of the Gore Range. The trail ends at a recently-refurbished homestead cabin located on private property.

Attractions: The Bighorn Creek Trail is shorter than other East Vail trails. It is a very steep, somewhat slippery climb in the beginning, but it is generally a fairly easy walk from there on. Just before mile 2 and past a large fern grove, there is an overlook down the steep drop to Bighorn Creek. This point makes a good destination for short hikes. The cabin is unlocked to offer shelter for hikers. Please respect this private property and help protect it for others to use and enjoy.

Important Information: Bighorn Creek is in the **Eagles Nest Wilderness**. Wilderness is for your use and enjoyment, but you have an obligation to leave it unimpaired for future generations. Please understand your responsibilities when visiting these special places. Leave them as you wish to find them:

- * Camping - camp at least 100 feet from streams, lakes, and trails
- * Dogs - must be leashed out of consideration for both other people and wildlife
- * Fire - campstoves are recommended. Fires are prohibited within 100 feet of any stream or Forest Service Trail, within ¼ mile of any lake, or above 11,000 feet in elevation.
- * Group size - limit group sizes to 15 people
- * Sanitation - bury human waste 100 feet from water and 6 inches in the soil
- * Overnight Registration - free, self-issue registration forms are available at wilderness trailheads and are **required** for overnight camping. No registration is required for day-use.

PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT!! LEAVE NO TRACE!!

